1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

VINES

Viticulture, has suffered many vicissitudes. Needing irrigation water only for the raising of scions, the vine would seem a crop plant eminently suitable for all but the thinnest dry calcareous soils. No satisfactory reason has yet been adduced for the present absence of 'expertise' in this field, and this unsatisfactory state of affairs is a Mediterranean anachronism. Since Giacinto (3) wondered at Maltese oenological ignorance various improvements havetaken place. Stock is American in origin imported during the Phylloxera epidemic in Europe. Scions are officially imported for grafting and are mainly from France. On the whole, too little specialisation is found, grapes being grown both for table use, fetching prices about £4 per qantar (175 lb. ave.), and for pressing - controlled prices 46s. to 48s. per qantar depending on quality. Commercial success in any other than the home market will depend entirely on whether the viticulturalist can now be weaned from quantity production to quality production. Products at present, while being remarkably good value, are not suitable for profitable export.

In Malta (Fig. 81), there is a striking concentration of viticulture in the western half of the island. In contrast to general Mediterranean practice, vines occupy much of the best watered heavy land of the Blue Clay slopes. Secondly, vines are of importance in the larger depressions with plentiful sub-soil water, for example the Wied il-Ghasel, the Bingemma Basin, and Mizieb. Those cultivated areas of the north and west which rely on pump irrigation - such as the Wied tal-Pwales, and the Rabat-Dingli upland pockets - have little land under vines. Over the remainder of the island, vines are mainly represented by wall- and house-side plants which, mainly for domestic use, are becoming of less importance as field cultivation is extended. This extension of acreage is taking place almost entirely in the traditional regions of the west.

As shown in Fig. 82, viticulture in Gozo, occurs in a great variety of conditions and there is a much greater extent of inter-cultivation with other tree-crops. Such inter-cultivation is particularly found in the *gulen* zones - the spring line belts lying below the Upper Coralline mesa cappings - as around Żebbuġ and Nadur. North of Nadur, it extends into the Wieds San Blas and Dahlet Qorrot. Except in the remote western lands and on the thin soils of the southern hills, vines are found everywhere; in the central mixed-soil lowlands, in the open northern valleys and on the eastern coastal slopes. This reflects the traditional self-sufficiency of the Gozitan farm economy, a point also brought out by the large number of vineries (see p. 213). The vine is also inter-cultivated with sulla which, undersown annually, is a useful soil-renewing and cleaning crop.

OLIVES

Inset maps, Figs. 81 and 82. Malta must be the only Mediterranean land where the tradition of olive cultivation has almost disappeared. Vegetable oil consumption is high and has to be supplied by imports costing on average nearly £300,000 per annum. Olive cultivation has been more extensive in the past as attested by place names such as Żebbuġ - the place of the olive, and Żejtun - olive tree, and is still perfectly feasible over a great deal of under-utilised land. Various reasons for this strange situation have been mooted, ranging from the completely invalid belief that the olive cannot stand sea-air to the inadequate charge that tenurial security is insufficiently great. The matter is still a mystery.

Recent extensions of planting, particularly at Salinas and on Bajda Ridge, have been Government-sponsored, and the latter case is basically a scheme for the afforestation of a water catchment and percolation area.

CITRUS FRUITS

Because of their large water requirements, oranges and lemons are of orchard importance only along the Upper Coralline - Blue Clay springlines in Western Malta and Eastern Gozo. Scattered trees and very small plots are found in many districts, often in the most unlikely places. The Seville orange, once of considerable importance, is now rarely found and most of the old trees have

[Text Continues on P. 217]

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

the heads of Wied Babu (219) and in the Santi Gap (57) in Malta and in the West-Central Region of Gozo. In such topographical pockets, the building of soil trap walls is sometimes extended to form walled orchards as at id-Dahla and the head of the Wied ir Rum.

When we turn to observation and consideration of cultivation reactions to minor topographical and geological features we are further reminded of the special relationship between tillage techniques and the soil. Bearing in mind the points noted in Chapter III B and the picture we have drawn of the physical and social environment in which Maltese agriculture has developed, we are forced to the following conclusions.

The economic necessity for the utilisation of virtually all land resources and indeed for creating some of them, together with the physical need for basing all farming practice on soil and water conservation techniques, have until very recently rigidly controlled the details of tillage. Fragmentation, a perfectly rational response to circumstances, has intensified the physical sub-division of the land. The majority of fields in Malta and Gozo cannot easily be worked except by small highly mobile implements. In the conditions described above and in a climate which makes possible a great crop range, implements must also be capable of a great diversity of application. In order to keep up the terraces, work the fields and succeed in maintaining and even increasing the area of cultivable land, the cultivator has been committed to unremitting and arduous manual labour. His basic tool is the hoe, his natural development of it the non-soil-inverting *ard*-plough.

The recent removal, by the creation of new real and psychological opportunities, of part of the pressure that has long kept the farmers on the land has altered the traditional picture. Cartographic evidence of the 25-inch to the mile maps, surveyed in the 1880's and 1890's, shows that since that time little waste-land has been improved. The only known large-scale change in field patterns occurred during and after World War II in the central lowlands of Gozo as the result of airfield construction, but holding fragmentation has re-imposed sub-division on the landscape. Occupational statistics and case-study evidence all point the same way. As a result of this release of pressure, land neglect and abandonment are now irregularly removing the extremes of control of cultivation. Even more important, Malta has been affected by the new evaluation of tillage techniques which has characterised so much of the world. Under modern conditions, most improvements in cultivation techniques have been deliberately designed for the increase of productivity on the better and more easily worked lands. Rural depopulation of the hard lands which gained such momentum in nineteenth-century Europe is an inevitable concomitant of such increases in productivity and of the accompanying demands for higher standards of material consumption and an 'easier' life. In countries such as Malta, this means that a new equilibrium has to be established, existing and new techniques and implements have to be evaluated against established environments and actual or potential changes.

Three examples from case-studies (Key letters refer to Chapter X E) can illustrate what this means in farmer's terms. The first (A. p. 337) concerns a part-time farmer in Region A II, Mellieha Isthmus. This cultivator corroborated other evidence that in the nineteenth century it was still common for 'dry' fields to be created out of wasteland. More recently it has only been economic to make irrigable fields. The method is virtually the same in either case. First a terrace is cut into the rock slope, and the stone rubble is then built outwards in 'made-ground' and held in place by a terrace wall. Soil, usually now from a building site, is then laid over the rock platform and stone infill. Such a field 2 *tmien* in extent in 1961 cost £180 in construction (almost entirely in labour) plus £50 for the transport of 20 truckloads of soil. The gross receipts from this irrigated *campa artificiali* were £60 and £35 respectively for the first two seasons. A generation previously, such work would have been done more slowly by full-time farmers who themselves would have garnered the soil, but the market for irrigated vegetables would have been smaller. A generation hence, a cultivator will add to the costs of construction all the at present uncosted labour expended

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

by himself and will think of net profit on his sales rather than of gross receipts. 241

The second example is from a case-study (J. p.342') of a full-time mixed farmer holding 33 *tmien* of dry land (three blocks of six field plots) in Region C XX a, the Mqabba-Kirkop Plain. During the last 20 years, this farmer has built up a herd of 13 Maltese Friesian cattle including ten milch cows from a flock of six goats. Before World War II he relied on crop-sales from arable land. Now approximately half the cultivated area is given over to fodder production. Although by Maltese standards this farmer is enterprising, knowledgeable and possessed of much more than average capital, he has no mechanised equipment for tillage but relies on contract work. Each year a tractor plough and rotary cultivator are hired at a cost of between 15s. and £1 per *tomna*. The farmer still differentiates very clearly between the quality of different parts of his land, on the basis of a soil depth which varies from 8 inches to 2 feet, and on soil type distinguished by colour. Nevertheless, since he is now only really interested in livestock, and regards even fodder production as uneconomic, he has lost interest in arable farming and tends to neglect the poorer land and think of disposing of the other. This man is typical of many of the better class farmers in that the old niceties of tillage are forgotten as commercial considerations predominate, these latter a resultant of social and economic change in the Islands.

Lastly we may consider the extreme development, the farmer turned machine contractor. Only half the age of the farmers already considered, this man is much more aware of general developments in the agricultural scene, partly as a result of seven years spent as an 'emigrant' in Australia. Patrimonial land is left to the attention of other members of the family, and he is only concerned with investment in machinery for hire. This contractor now possesses a lorry, a Ferguson hydraulic lift tractor, a hydraulic shovel, triple-disc and mould-board ploughs, a rotavator as well as numerous accessories, and wants to purchase a thresher and a small combine harvester. The whole cultivation emphasis is put on mechanical effort and its ease of application. Deep-ploughing is advocated wherever possible even though he admits 'there may be drawbacks'; no qualms are felt about knocking down walls to gain admittance to fields, and considerable impatience shown towards traditional agrarian and social values. This man even complained that he was not allowed to plough on Sundays. One of his ambitions is the quintessence of the new attitude towards cultivation. It is to have a farm of 30-40 *tmien*, all in one block with no patch smaller than about an acre, the whole to be workable by tractor, thus making hand labour unnecessary, and accessible to heavy machinery. The holding should have its own farmhouse and be near to a market such as Żabbar. In this man the mechanical revolution in cultivation in Malta is epitomised, contrasting strangely with an attitude met at Rabat that the wheelbarrow is too technically revolutionary to be acceptable - 'it is not used here!'

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

D. Economic and Commercial Characteristics

In 1956, Surridge (1) in a note on Co-operatives in Malta, endorsed the F.A.O. statement (2) that 'real progress in the co-operative field will be impossible so long as the essential connection between credit facilities and marketing remains unrecognised'. 241 433

Subsistence farming is not now practised in the Maltese Islands and all farmers are to a large extent controlled in their productive use of land by commercial markets. The application of capital and techniques to the land is much more than the simple provision of cheap credit.

Environmental conditions necessitate the continued and intensive use of hand labour in order to maintain in existence the artificially made fields and in order to utilise the maximum area of land. Therefore large-scale capital application is restricted to provision of better water supplies and similar public works projects. What is needed is the small scale use of capital in crops and livestock experimentation and for backing efforts in the export markets. Capital provision for land purchase should not be made until cultivators are less likely to indulge in speculative 'landgrabbing' which would result in greater problems of fragmentation, etc.

The amount of hidden capital in the countryside must be very considerable. Estimates that 80 per cent. of Malta's National Income is derived directly and indirectly from the Defence Departments cannot take into account all the gross real income in kind of the countryside - real income which never appears long enough to be measured. Present expenditure on improved equipment and better breeds of plant and livestock as well as spectacular efforts such as the building of Mosta Church go to show that, given incentive and faith in the future, the rural communities can and will deploy some considerable hidden reserves. Before any such capital will be applied, some compulsive force must operate on the farmers. [454] [434]

For centuries past, production has been largely for subsistence except for cotton and cumin seed, both exported to other Mediterranean countries. From the sixteenth century onward, urbanisation slowly created a significantly sized indigenous market and, with the disappearance of the trade in cotton during the nineteenth century, the home market became completely dominant. Some 70 years ago, potatoes became profitably exportable, while at the same time rapid urbanisation increased the size and wealth of the home market. As already noted, the domestic market for milk is of very recent origin, while export possibilities for crops other than potatoes are now slowly being realised.

Until World War II, marketing of produce was organised almost entirely by licensed but uncontrolled middlemen - the *pilkali* - who collected or accepted small lots, offered them for sale to wholesalers or retailers, and then paid the farmers the negotiated price less commission. (The details of organisation are well described in the 1911-12 Royal Commission Report (3).) During World War II, 'the evolution of Internal Marketing made a great stride forward during the exigency... (4)'. This statement really means that controls were imposed on prices and marketing, controls which have basically survived to the present day. As the economics of production have become more confused with welfare policies, so the complexity of the situation has increased. All that we can do here is to sketch and illustrate the nature of this complexity. 241 441 435

The first factor to be reckoned with is that cultivators in no case know their costs of production. They have some general idea of whether a proposed price is unprofitable or not but this is not necessarily trustworthy. Secondly, while the fodder crops are not very perishable, the vegetable and fruit products which find their way out of the rural economy into Maltese markets are extremely so. While the market for such produce in Malta is not a very selective one, this on the whole has the effect of encouraging the sending to market of produce which is very liable to deterioration. In the markets, therefore, any produce surplus to clear requirements is virtually valueless. One complaint concerning the

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

241 441 435 *pilkali* system is that the middlemen charged commission for negotiating sales but took no stock risks. Thus, when wholesalers and retailers had satisfied their requirements, playing for safety themselves, the *pilkali* merely informed some unfortunate producers that their product could not be sold. The prices attained for that which could be sold varied with the skill of the *pilkali*. Since many Maltese farmers need forward credit for various purposes, it was perfectly natural that the *pilkal* became not only a middleman but a supplier of credit and therefore to some extent a controller of production. The whole of this system resulted from two simple facts. First, the quantities of individual items that most farmers could daily offer for sale were so small as to make some concentrating agency a logical development. Secondly, the social legacy of dichotomy between town and country meant that the farmer was most often incapable of dealing directly with his market. Questions of literacy, language and social status still often put the farmer in a position of inferiority. The *pilkali* bridged that gap. In so doing they have sometimes exploited the farmers' ignorance. Many and vivid are the stories heard of their dishonesty; one such, told by several farmers, concerned the spring export crop of potatoes in 1955. They had been told by middlemen that the U.K. market had been depressed by competition from France and Spain and that therefore the prices offered would have to be low. In fact, shippers declared that the poor quality of the 1954 crops had discouraged some buyers but that the f.o.b. prices were still very much higher than reported by the middlemen. Most *pilkali* are no doubt honest but many farmers bypass them where possible and most others have suspicions - mostly born of their own ignorance.

During World War II, control of all agricultural produce had to be established and, since this time, the financial side of such transactions has been controlled by Government clerks at established *pilkali* markets although the middlemen still handle the actual sales. The intrusion of Governmental financial control has not removed suspicion although it has removed part of the cause of it at the cost of a higher commission charged to the producer. The annual cost of this protection and the controls mentioned below to individual farmers and to small co-operatives is almost £23,000 (5).

Another development has further confused the situation. Stemming from wartime controls, policies aimed at controlling prices for the benefit of the consumer have replaced the old attitude of *caveat emptor*. Various methods have been adopted but they are all based on regulating maximum retail prices, directly and by fixing maximum profit margins and percentages of profit. As noted by many observers, and effectively by an Adviser on Marketing (6), such controls cannot be strictly enforced and it is impossible to make them sufficiently flexible to encourage the production virtues of improved quality and evenness of supply in time. It must suffice here to say that the marketing side of commercial agriculture is not in a satisfactory state, being as it is costly, wasteful and very beneficial neither to consumer nor to producer judging by a great number of local statements.

234 435 441 [467] The local market for livestock products is very different. All milk (7) legally sold is bought by the Milk Marketing Undertaking which in practice accepts any quantity of milk delivered to the collecting depots dispersed through the Islands. There is a tendency to restrict goats' milk acceptances during the summer period of glut by relating summer and winter ratios. Many producers still have written contracts but more important than individual arrangements is the negotiating power of the K.M.H. (the union of milk producers already cited) which incorporates about half of the 600 or so registered producers in the island of Malta. The fixed and scheduled prices paid to producers bear no real relation to production costs since these are not known but rather result from M.M.U.-K.M.H. negotiations and political and welfare decisions by the Government. The M.M.U. takes full risk over wastage and excess production of liquid milk and processed milk products, but is partly able to offset losses by trading profits on imports of dried, evaporated and condensed milk which sales it handles. The M.M.U. now distributes all legally sold liquid milk, as well as its own milk products, and retail prices are fixed by announcement. In 1955-56 the result

was that gross financial loss totalled £124,000 representing an equivalent subsidy to consumers of M.M.U. products, while, if profits on imports were subtracted the figure would rise to over £200,000. The commercial aspect of milk marketing is thus completely artificial and dominated by welfare policies. Price policy, even so, has not been powerful enough to even out the immense seasonal fluctuation in production of goats' milk, roughly half the total, and the smaller but still considerable fluctuation of cows' milk.

Meat production is rather more crude. The Government abattoir slaughters all the horned cattle, most of the swine and a considerable proportion of sheep and goats. The commercial transaction between producer and butcher is usually direct. Here once more the small scale and the unspecialised nature of meat production controls all else. The 1956 Census of Agriculture recorded only nine specialist cattle breeders and 94 breeders of swine as compared with over 700 engaged in sheep and goat breeding (in roughly equal numbers). Licensed importers bring in the store cattle which are then usually sold to non-specialist farmers. Feeding standards are as low as with milch cows. There is little incentive to improvement because of the low standard set by the widespread practice of milk producers selling old and diseased stock for butchering. Pig meat and store-bull meat do command a premium but, while some 15,320 horned cattle were slaughtered in 1957-58, the average import rate of stores is only some 3,000. In the same year, 5,000 sheep (of the indigenous poor breeds) and 8,400 goats (mainly those useless for milk production) as well as 7,800 lambs and kids, were slaughtered. The commercial side of meat and, for that matter, hides and skin production, like that of milk, can only be improved as and when the arable sector of agriculture is further developed.

Lastly, we must refer to exports. For some years, the most important exported agricultural product has been the spring crop of potatoes. Some general points concerning the production and sale of potatoes have already been made (Chapter VII, pp. 205-206), but one or two points need expansion here. The main market for pseudo-early potatoes grown in the Mediterranean (harvested in April and May), lies in North-West Europe. During the earlier part of this century, Holland, Belgium and Germany were the most important buyers but, of recent years, the Arran Banner variety, which yields well as a pseudo-early in Malta, has only found favour in Glasgow. By 1955 this dependence on a single main market was appearing dangerous and since that time, as noted by Haesler in 1957 (8), more heed has been taken of consumer demand for other earlier varieties, yellow rather than white fleshed, such as the Eigenhemer. On the marketing side, some important problems remain. The virtual absence of good civilian port facilities and the dependence on lighterage puts up freight costs and discourages shippers. The middlemen and wholesale handling of produce for export is not above reproach while the only worthwhile markets expect good and consistent quality of graded merchandise. Here the deficiencies of even the most commercially sophisticated part of the community can partly negate improved efforts on the part of the producer. Standards set by the home market tend to affect the services rendered to foreign markets and before the latter can be expanded, the former will have to be improved. There is one sector in which a separate break-through has begun. Air freightage of high value for bulk merchandise (which does not include potatoes) can make distant markets accessible to medium-scale individual producers. Thus flowers, plants and seeds are to some small extent being traded by a few growers sufficiently skilled to bypass the mercantile system. This cannot be done by all but it might encourage emulation.

The whole of the marketing organisation is of course organically associated with production and the commercial aspects of production need consideration.

One of the first points that strikes an observer in the Islands is that the production of the different commodities is altogether too concentrated in time. In the case of milk, a traditional organic cycle imposed by crude goat husbandry imposes great financial strains on the centralised agencies. With crops it would seem that traditional fear of risk-taking, rational enough in a peasant economy but antithetical to the whole nature of commercialism, is now hampering

1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

241 development and straining even the existing pattern. In the first place, physical
433 environment so dominates the mind of the Maltese farmer that he categorically
435 asserts the virtues and deficiencies of various regions and does not realise that with the techniques and crop-strains at his disposal he now can negate some of these differentiations. Thus the case-study quoted on p. 329 is atypical rather than normal. The result is that in these Islands, which have a long thermal growing season, there are very marked seasonal fluctuations in production. With cauliflowers, tomatoes, carrots and some other vegetables the produce suddenly appears on the markets, prices soar through the fixed ceilings and then as suddenly slump with glut. For the rest of the year - January to September in the case of cauliflowers, and for all except June to September with tomatoes - good quality produce is not available. Prices to the producer range from very high to zero and such fluctuations, superimposed on those caused by climatic variations, both strain the farming economy and encourage poor production. Thus some winter grown Arran Banner sold for up to 50s. per *qantar* in 1956 but only 8s. 4d. in 1958; in January 1957, unsold cauliflowers could be bought from *pitkali* for fodder at 1s. a sack, while a year later they fetched almost 1s. a *wizna* (8½ lb. av.).

241 Secondly, the concentration in time of the various harvests causes severe
464 fluctuations in the demand for labour. All farmers interviewed regard hired
465 labour as poor in quality and expensive. This is a frequent grumble in many countries but in the Maltese context there are some special implications. The number of agricultural labourers, which declined in the nineteenth century as pressure on land resources diminished holding size and encouraged cultivation by occupiers, further declined as urban employment opportunities increased. That pool which is left to some extent sets its standards of wage demand by urban levels, but more important still is only urgently required at two seasons of the year. During the first of these, March to middle May, it is needed for the harvesting of cereals, sulla, potatoes and other winter crops and for the first of the summer cultivations. The second period, about September, coincides with the grape harvest which lasts but three weeks, and with autumn tillage. The result is to elevate day-wage rates to the point of discouragement for the farmer and to lower seasonal earnings so as to repel possible labourer recruits. Merchants, vintners, fodder and food consumers and producers all suffer, and suffer needlessly when one realises the climatic possibilities for extending production.

241 To sum up, one may say that the farmer, although largely producing for the
433 market, is generally unable to cost his efforts, deal on equal terms with traders, or appreciate the needs of the market domestic or foreign. This inability must be corrected because the farmer and his land are potentially capable of supplying more of the Islands' agricultural needs than they do at present, and of making a considerable positive contribution to the balance of trade which at the moment they help to distort.

REFERENCES

113 1. SURRIDGE, B. G.: A Note to the Minister of Posts and Agriculture, Malta. 1957. Central Office of Information.
2. F.A.O.: Report on the Development of Agricultural Resources in Malta. Rome. 1955. Restricted.
3. Report of the Royal Commission 1911-13. Vol. II, Report by Inspector of Agriculture.
4. Memorandum by the Director of Agriculture to Sir George Schuster, Malta. 1950.
5. SURRIDGE, B. G.: op. cit.
6. HOFSTEDE, IR. P. TER: F.A.O. Interim Report 1956. Malta. Unpublished.
7. see in particular FORD, G. W.: The Dairy Industry in the Maltese Islands 1958. U.K. Ministry of Agriculture.
8. HAESLER, A. T.: Report on the Agricultural Advisory Service 1954-57. 1957. Malta. Dept. of Agriculture. Unpublished.

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

competing for the attention of the crowd within a few yards of each other.

All the while, the procession, followed by a few black-clad penitents, solemnly passes through the main streets of the village. Often those carrying the saint move with a shuffling step that causes him to bob and turn as though he were dancing. As he passes under balconies his cheering and clapping admirers shower him with confetti. Then, as the procession nears the church, the final *kaxxa infernal*, this time of coloured rockets, is touched off. In some villages the saint is turned around so that he can see this barrage and the display of multi-staged rockets that follows it. The statue then enters the church and the Benediction is given. After this the crowd of visitors quickly disperses. Soon the inhabitants have the village to themselves again. As the women and girls wheel and pull the children off to bed, the men carry around from club to club the grimy, soot-stained men who made and fired the fireworks. They are the heroes of the hour. Other men seek out their clubs or usual cafés and toast one another and the success of their feast. So ends the festa for another year.

The organization of the annual festa requires a long period of planning and preparation. This work calls for a certain degree of centralization. In most villages the parish priest controls the organization of both the internal and the external feasts. In some villages, however, he delegates some of this work to a procurator, usually a priest, but occasionally to a committee of leading personalities of the village. In other villages, all the details of the external feast, including the fund raising, are handled by the band club committees. In any case, the parish priest always has the last word. Sometimes there is friction between him and other interested parties over organizational details.

The cost of these feasts varies considerably. It is naturally related to the size of the village and to the degree of enthusiasm with which the festa is celebrated. It ranges from a few shillings per family in a large urban parish to as much as £15 per family in a small rural parish celebrating a particularly important festa. The average cost to the community, however, is about £1,000. The organizers of the festa collect the necessary funds by means of lotteries, fairs, special appeals and a small weekly contribution of threepence or sixpence from each family. Most fund raisers also solicit pledges from leading citizens and enter their names and the

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

sums pledged on a long list. This method, called *l-arbural*, permits donors to compare their contributions with those of others. Then there may be several unofficial groups who raise funds for fireworks, which they manufacture and fire as their special contributions to the feast.

While I was living in Farrug, the village celebrated the centenary of St. Martin, the titular saint of the parish. The festa cost a total of £1,465. Of this sum the parish priest raised and spent £302 for the elaborate internal feast, of which he took complete charge. The rest, some £1,163, was collected and spent on the external feast by the committee of the St. Martin Band Club. The fireworks, including most of the gunpowder, were made illegally by the members of the club in their houses and in sheds and abandoned quarries surrounding the village. The cost of the raw materials amounted to £712. Committee members divided the actual work among themselves, and set up sub-committees dealing with decoration, music, fireworks and fund-raising. With the exception of the extra lighting for the streets and the church, which was done by an outside contractor, all the work involved in the festa was done by local inhabitants.

In Kortin, on the other hand, the parish priest personally controls every aspect of the festa. With the assistance of the Sodality of Our Lady, he collects all the funds. Most of the street decoration is done by Anton and Pawlu, who get a number of people to help them. In the following table, I have summarized the rather complicated accounts of the 1961 festa in Kortin.

TABLE 3. Kortin 1961 Festa Accounts

INCOME	£ s.	EXPENSES	£ s.
Internal Feast		*Internal Feast*	
Collections	143 10	Music	150 0
Special gifts	121 10	Other	50 0
External Feast		*External Feast*	
Three collections	221 10	Decorations, programmes, etc.	39 14
Weekly 3d.	120 0	Fireworks: crackers and ground display only	105 16
Lotteries	90 0	Bands: 8 performances	224 10
'Arbural'	53 0	Lighting	170 0
		Balance	9 10
Total	£749 10	*Total*	£749 10

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

In addition to the sums which the parish priest spent on fireworks, another £472 was collected by six groups of enthusiasts and spent on raw materials for the fireworks which they manufactured. The total cost to the village was thus £1,212. In all respects this was an average festa for a village of 5,000.

The festa in Kortin has not always been controlled by the parish priest. Dun Bert, the present incumbent, had something of a struggle to seize and hold the reins of authority. Until he took over the parish eight years ago the external festa had been run by a committee. Though the parish priest was *ex officio* head of this committee, the actual affairs of the committee were run by old Manwel and the father of the curate, who was general manager of the festa for over thirty years. The committee also included the latter's wife's father and brother in its membership. His brother was killed twenty-five years ago in an explosion which wrecked the village's officially licensed firework factory and killed four others. This committee used to book the bands, repaint, erect and store the decorations and collect all the funds for the external feast. One of its major responsibilities was to run the two large fund-raising fairs which were held every year in the school. Next to the festa, these fairs were the favourite amusement of the village. Thus when Dun Bert arrived in Kortin, he found his was only a nominal role as far as the external festa was concerned. As he is a man who likes to run things his own way, the arrangement did not suit him. Moreover, he was concerned with the financial position of the parish, and in particular with the interest on the £3,000 that his predecessor had borrowed from the Curia to help finance the unfinished parish hall. To be able to meet all the parish's financial commitments, he felt that he had to have control of all its financial resources. The first year, however, he did very little about it.

During his second year in Kortin, the newly elected Labour Government came to his assistance, albeit unwittingly. The new Minister of Education refused permission to the organizers of the Kortin festa to hold a public fair in the school. This deprived the organizers of their major source of income, and threatened the festa. Dun Bert quickly took over the financial management of the festa and made two house-to-house collections. These raised the necessary funds and saved the festa. He then gave to the Sodality of Our Lady the responsibility of collecting threepence a week from each household. But for six months of the year these

[Village of Mgarr]

Building went ahead slowly on the immense construction as costs were defrayed by private subscription in kind and in money, and the villagers were themselves responsible for much of the labouring work. Money and farm produce of every variety was given towards the cost which, in 1939, had passed £10,000 (B/54 - 12.8.1939); this in a parish which even ten years later had no more than 2,218 people (B/167 - 1948).

With the growth of Mgarr, assistant priests were attached to the Parish, notably Father (later Monsignor) Edgar Salamone, who went to the village in 1920 and became Parish Priest a decade later. The work of this one priest not only pays him personal tribute but illustrates the way in which Mgarr acquired the characteristics and features possessed by other villages of much longer standing in the Islands, with the Church itself as the prime consideration and focus of energy and resources. Mgr. Salamone was "sickened by the ignorance and backwardness of the people of Mgarr"[15] and set about establishing some sort of schooling in the village. He acquired premises, used at week-ends by the part-time village barber, and opened a school in 1920 for about 40 children and adults. Three years later a Government elementary school was opened (19.9.1923) and support for this still novel feature of the village grew fast enough for nearly all children to be attending when the Compulsory Attendance Act was passed in 1926.

At this time the health of the villagers was cared for by a Dispensary which opened once a week and by Mgr. Salamone himself. A statement in the Malta Legislative Assembly of 1933 observed that the Priest of Mgarr kept "a medicine chest of his own and people used to call on him at all hours of the day and night. He used to pack up his medical kit and go to anyone's bedside, whenever he was called for" (B/291, p.6). As in all things the villagers turned to their Priest in difficulty or trouble whether spiritual, medical or social, as had been the custom for centuries. In 1933, however, the first medical officer for Mgarr began his duties in the village, and another of the traditional functions of the Priest passed to specialist hands.

After this, interest was turned again to building and the spacious esplanade in front of the Church was laid out in 1935, followed by a nearby construction to house the Police Station, Post Office, Government Dispensary and the District Medical Officer. Once again the villagers themselves were responsible for a great deal of the building work, as they were in the case of the Church which continued to grow until its completion and dedication in 1948 - at a total cost of some £16,000[15]. By the mid-thirties Mgarr had

407 474 with the setting up of co-operatives which would make available to the farmer the services of a heavy tractor and deep-plow on hire as required and would enable the very small-scale farmer and the part-timer to hire the smaller type of cultivating machine at low cost in cases where he does not wish or cannot afford to purchase his own cultivator.

SUBSIDY and GUARANTEE

435 241 654 During the 1939-45 War the Maltese Government offered farmers in the Islands very high guaranteed prices for produce handed in to the collection centres in each district. Farmers enjoyed for a brief period prosperity they had never known before and were able to build up often considerable financial reserves (Cases VI, XII).

434 435 241 654 Following this precedent the farmer today, under quite different conditions of competition from abroad, demands a guaranteed income for the work he expends on crop and milk production. He insists that responsibility for this subsidy and guarantee falls, as in war-time siege years, on "Il-Gvern", the Government. He overlooks the fact that his produce cannot in many cases hope to compete with foreign goods on price. He is in fact not concerned as to who buys his produce so long as "Il-Gvern" organizes its export and marketing and gives him a substantial return.

654 The Government, for its part, realizes the difficulties which the farmer in Malta and Gozo has to face and is thus confronted with a choice of policy. Should it favour the consuming Maltese public by giving them the cheapest possible foodstuffs (which would often mean imported goods rather than Maltese home produce) or should it protect the farmer by subsidizing his profit and guaranteeing his sales - at least in part? Official policy has of recent years tended to do both these things. The ration of basic commodities (bread, sugar, farinaceous paste, and butter) allows everyone in the Islands to obtain a part of the food they consume at low, subsidized prices, over and above which they are at liberty to buy on the open market.

The aid-to-farming programme is still more recent and is by no means yet old enough for all its ramifications and possibilities to be clear. So far it has included four main types of help to agriculture.

234 654 (a) First there is the guaranteed price to herdsmen for milk (of adequate fat content) supplied to the M.M.U. This varies slightly with season and there is a difference of a few pence between cows' and goats' milk. The average of some 5/- or 6/- per gallon to the producer amounts to some 8d per pint produced. Now the M.M.U. sells

128 [226] PART 3. A note on the Fishermen of Malta and Gozo is included because the economic position of this comparatively small group is in many ways similar to that of the farming community itself.

*159 234 654 PART 1. Maltese Farming - Case Studies I-XIII

CASE I: Pawlu. (A Gozitan large-scale goats' milk producer with a considerable land-holding.)

Pawlu gives the impression of being one of the more prosperous of herdsmen in his native Gozo. He is currently concentrating his effort on his 46 goats and 2 cows and is typical of the many herdsmen in the Islands who are today profiting from the official M.M.U. policy of a guaranteed sale for milk produced. He receives between 5/- and 6/- per gallon, according to season, provided only that the milk passes certain fat-content and other tests. [435]

This is the background to Pawlu's present specialization on milk at the expense of vegetable and fodder production for sale, a specialization which enables him to run his farm as an apparently profitable concern. The vulnerability of his position is however evident. A drastic change in the official policy of 'subsidy by guarantee' would snatch away the basis of his income as it would that of the many herdsmen like him.

*159 55 423 [463] Pawlu's father was primarily a tailor, working a few fields in a part-time capacity. His grandfather had been a quarryman. In 1935, when he was thirty-two, Pawlu married the daughter of a farmer in his village. From that date onward he began to build up his own farm-holding - he had previously worked as a hired farm labourer. At his marriage he was given the tenancy of some land both by his own family and by that of his wife, land to which he added in later years plots taken over from other tenants together with some further land from his family. Some of the plots which Pawlu acquired he later abandoned, sold, sub-let or exchanged on account of small size, inaccessibility, distance, etc., and he also declined to take over the working of 16 tmien (which would have come from his wife's family on marriage) on account of the distance of the fields from the home. A statement of the holding illustrates some characteristic features of the Maltese farm - its parcellation, the small amount owned rather than leased or held on rental, the variety of owners concerned in the case of most of the plots, the types of sources from which the fields were acquired, reasons for the relinquishing of certain pieces and the scattered nature of the holding of twenty-six separate plots spread over a quarter of the Island of Gozo (B/325).

TABLE V.

(Case V : Accounts)

Date	Dealer	Fodder	Rtal[1]	Shillings per rotal	Cost £ -s- d	Payment £ -s- d
7.12.56	B	Beans	287	70	10 - 0-10	
		Cake	201	50	5 - 0- 6	
		Corn[2]	113	56	2 -18-	
5. 1.57	B	Beans	285	71	10 - 2- 6	
		Cake	215	49	5 - 5- 3	
15. 1.57	B					5 - 8- 5
1. 2.57	B	Beans	255	71	9 - 0- 1	
		Cake	319	49	7 -18- 3	
						13 - 1- 7
15. 2.57	B	Beans	291	72	10 - 9- 0	
		Cake	186	48	4 - 9- 6	
						17
27. 2.57	B	Cake	638	47	15	
						15
15. 3.57	B	Beans	180	71	6 - 7- 9	
		Cake	365	47	8 -11- 6	
						15
1. 4.57	B	Beans	185	70	6 - 9- 6	
		Cake	278	48	6 - 4- 9	
						15
15. 4.57	B	Beans	218	69	7 -10- 0	
		Cake	282	46	6 - 6- 9	
						15
27. 4.57	A	Beans	282½	65	9 - 3- 9	
		Cake	266½	44	5 -17- 3	
		Corn[2]	95	58	2 -15- 3	
1. 5.57	B	Cake	582	45	13 - 2- 0	
		W.Potato[3]	205		2 - 1- 0	
						17 - 4
16. 5.57	A	Beans	76		2 - 9- 6	
17. 5.57	B	Beans	119	69	4 - 2- 0	
		Cake	474	45	10 -13- 6	
20. 5.57	B					15
21. 5.57	A	Beans	316		10 - 2- 6	
		Cake	323½	44	7 - 2- 6	
1. 6.57	B					15
3. 6.57	B	Beans	211	69	7 - 5- 6	
		Cake	290	45	6 -10- 6	
4. 6.57	A	Beans	363½	64	9 -14- 2	
		Cake	271½	44	5 -19- 6	
		Bran			6- 0	
12. 6.57	B					15
19. 6.57	B	Cake	621	45	13 -19- 5	
22. 6.57	A	Beans	330½	56	9 - 5- 0	
		Cake	261½	44	5 -15- 2	
2. 7.57	B	Beans	365	57	9 - 6- 3	
		Cake	325	45	7 - 6- 3	
						15
5. 7.57	A	Beans	338	50½	8 -10- 9	
		Cake	280½	44	6 - 3- 6	
1. 7.57	A					8
13. 7.57	A					15
16. 7.57	B	Cake	753	44	17 -11- 3	
						16
27. 7.57	A	Beans	371	48	8 -18- 6	
		Cake	298½	44	6 -11- 6	
1. 8.57	B	Beans	171	57	4 - 7- 3	
		Cake	383	45	8 -12- 3	
						15
2. 8.57	A					15
8. 8.57	A	Dari seed	96	52	2 -10- 0	
9. 8.57	A	Beans	344	51	8 -15- 6	
		Cake	288	44	6 - 8- 3	
14. 8.57	A					17
16. 8.57	B					15
23. 8.57	A	Beans	399½	51	10 - 3- 9	
					£353 - 1- 8	£273 -14- 0

[426] 1. 9.57 Debt (to A) - £79.7.8d

(1 - see Appendix 5; 2 - qamh harun; 3 - patata tax-xitwa)

H. General.

159
433

This farmer is typical of many herdsmen. Without capital or land he derives from previous generations of peripatetic herdsmen who milked their goats on the 'rounds' of urban houses. Now forced to sell his milk to a centralised agency (the M.M.U.) for pasteurisation he is protected from price decline during the summer season of over-production but prevented from obtaining extra profits and perquisites (often of rather a dubious character). Without capital he has to rely on credit terms for fodder purchases and therefore pays merchant prices which are higher than those of other farmers. A garden plot and the stock supplies about half the family's food, without which increment the family economy could not operate. There is no possible future except on a low level for this type of production.

159
231
232

CASE VI : Gaetu (A milk producer with a considerable land holding.)

In May, 1957, Gaetu had 9 cows and about 50 goats. During the year he sold some thirteen goats for the abattoir and of the eight kids born in the year several died "because they didn't want to go on living". In November of the same year three of his cows had to be killed, two of them on account of 'paralysis of the feet' (probably related to lack of exercise and perpetual stall-feeding). The goats get scarcely more grazing than the cows, being limited to the small yards adjoining the main farm building (v. Map 8).

The compulsory slaughter of the three ailing cows (for which he will be entitled to import replacements) has profoundly shaken Gaetu's faith in cows in general. He maintains that he "will put his efforts into goats for the loss of a goat means a loss of £10 against the £200 in the case of a cow."

159
234
[311]
[246]
435
[464]

Together with his adult son, Gaetu works 23 tmien of land, including some which is irrigable; and the emphasis in cropping is heavily on fodder production. But they still have to buy in a considerable amount of food. For example in the 1956-57 winter Gaetu spent £175 on sulla, £99 for straw, and £15 on winter potatoes which were in glut. He feeds his animals according to yield which appears to mean that he gives more food and attention to the better yielding animals. "There is no profit in providing expensive fodder for poor-yielding animals." In fact, however, Gaetu has very little appreciation of his profit. None of his labour or that of his son is counted as a cost and he keeps no detailed account of income and expenditure. He gets receipts from the M.M.U. but otherwise, being illiterate himself, feels "reluctant to ask anyone for a written statement". Nevertheless he reckons to be able to put together some sort of balance sheet for the income-tax authorities each year.

[451]

[65]

159 For once a single man can be convinced of the success of a
829 novel method or crop he will soon be copied by his fellows.
178 Wenzu himself observes that when he had heard about the
244 lucerne for the first time and had planted some with great success in his own fields neighbouring farmers were not slow to copy him (v. Section 4).

CASE VII : Summary.

159 (A goats' and cows' milk producer with a small land holding.)

423 A. Land.
427 - Has 3 tmion, worked by another farmer who shares income (£21) with him.
- Holds on lease a further area which had been let out for building and brings him £32 p.a. - much more than could be obtained for its crops.
- Also rents grazing in summer months.

159 B. Utilisation.
24 - The 3 tmion field is under sulla, barley and a few vegetables.

C. Livestock.
159 - Is changing over from goats to cattle.
23 - Goats: 1954: 60; 1957: 44; 1958: 38.
234 - Cattle: 4 Friesians. Aims to build up the herd by private import of Ayrshires of which he has a high opinion. 3 of the cattle are owned by his sons though he tends them.

159 D. Capital.
454 - No information, but appears to have some reserves.

E. Labour.
464 - Some assistance from a son who is in govt. employment.
- Hires no labour.
- Thus does great bulk of the work himself.

F. Production and Sales.
434 - Milk (Oct. 1957) 10 gallons goats' milk, 9 gallons
234 cows' milk daily to M.M.U. Gives sons a share in income though they appear to make no payment to their father for fodder, stall accommodation etc.
- Calves and kids usually sold after weaning.

G. Husbandry.
159 (1) Grazing. Where possible, goats grazed out and this is
23 said to save him 15/- a day and to reduce sulla consumption to 4 bundles daily.
429 - Rents 7 tmien of govt. land from part-timers at £1
311 per month from Jan. to Aug.
- This land is good, cultivable land untended because of part-timers' inability to work it.

(2) Fodder.
- Cake, barley, potatoes, beans, sulla.
- Feeds all that the animals will take.
- Buys in bulk when prices low.
- In six months (Oct. 1957-Mar. 1958) used nearly ½ tons of cake and 15 tons of beans.
435 - Sulla is bought at 9/- to 16/- per hemol according to
434 quality and uses some 200 hmiel per annum.
- Fodder costs leave very small profit margin from milk.

H. General.
159 - Attempting to profit from sales to M.M.U. with no
156 knowledge of the economics involved.
- Extremely suspicious of agents, government etc.

159 - Has a higher opinion of his ability as a stock farmer than facts warrant.
156 - Aims to build up cattle herd in place of goats since he assumes (with no factual background) that profit
[231] will be greater.
- Much influenced by personalities and is willing to accept advice uncritically if the person giving it is, in his opinion, sound.
- Lacks educational background and experience necessary to make a real profit from his herd, but seems content with present living conditions.

CASE VIII : Niklaws (A working partnership of five brothers with diversified production)

159 472 Niklaws is the primus inter pares in a permanent par-
[423] tnership of five brothers. The syndicate farms some 70
[234] acres and, in February, 1957, had a herd of thirty cattle. There is some division of labour among the five, with one being acknowledged the expert on cattle, another "knows most about the fields", and a third the driver and general business manager. Both their father, who died in 1915, and their grandfather were farmers but the brothers have considerably added to the holding.

159 472 234 433 The emphasis of the partnership is now heavily on cows' milk production. They retain only two goats. With about 20 cows in milk they aim to produce some 50 gallons a day - Niklaws observes that the yield from cows can be maintained while that of goats fluctuates markedly with the seasons. Costs of cows' milk production are also steadier, says
[232] Niklaws, with fresh greenery in the winter and prickly pear in the summer months as supplements to the standard items of diet. The fodder produced on the brothers' own fields has to be supplemented by purchased feed but judicious use is made of vegetables in glut, especially cauliflowers which could be bought by the farmer at 1s per sack in early 1957.

159 407 454 234 [429] Mechanization on the farm includes the hiring of a mould-board and tractor to deep-plow the land every fourth year (cost - £1 per tomna), and the hiring of a threshing machine. The brothers themselves own two hand cultivators and a small van, complete with the partnership insignia on the door. Currently much capital is being put into building a large, two-storey cows' shed within the village. The brothers aim to centralise their milk herd here and plan to have an adjacent exercise yard and water tank. At present their animals are divided among three widely separated byres, although all of these are easily accessible by road - and the van. One of the existing sheds was built between 1949 and 1952 at a cost of "£3,000". On the costs of the present
[435] building Niklaws will divulge nothing. His attitude suggests that the money is coming from saved reserves rather than a loan, for he appears reluctant to borrow money even on low interest terms "because anything might happen to prevent the money being repaid."

*159 231 The cattle are very mixed in breed including "Bastard-Inglizi", supposedly pure Friesians and crosses between the two.

*159 D. Capital.

(i) No freehold property.

421 (ii) In perpetual debt, no reserves and frequent borrowings, particularly from the Government.

[423] (iii) Equipment - usual hand tools

[454] - rotary cultivator bought with a Government loan of £550, repayable at £100 p.a. plus 1% interest.

[407] - small motor van, bought in 1953, for transport of milk.

[312] - no piped water until Feb. 1958.

*159 E. Labour.

464 - No permanent hired labour.

- One man and his daughter together at 30/- per diem and one youth at 25/- engaged at busy times.

- Family labour: two partners and their two eldest sons work full-time and there is additional help from wives and children.

*159 F. Production and Sales.

434 - Income almost entirely from sale of milk to M.M.U. Production varies greatly: June 1957: 50 galls. daily; Dec. 1957: 35; Feb. 1958: 80. Sold at

●435 5/6 to 6/- per gall.

- Male calves sold to butcher at £10; females sometimes sold at £30-£40 to pay debts.

- No accounts kept of feeding costs. These include one truckload of prickly pear (30/-) daily from June to October, beans at 55/- per qantar and cake at 46/- (July 1957). A considerable amount of grazing is carried out e.g. on sulla bought green at £6 per tonne.

- Potato sales insignificant and in 1957, owing to glut, involved a loss.

[433] - Vegetables produced are all consumed by the families.

*159 G. Husbandry.

231 (i) - The importance attached to grazing of cattle is unusual. (Most Maltese cattle are stall-fed all the year.)

- The emphasis is on numbers of stock rather than on their quality. The turn-over from goats to cattle has been helped by the government exchange scheme and by Govt. loans.

[232] - Occasional outbreaks of disease unnoticed until too late.

[241] (ii) - Crops are often neglected owing to time involved in animal husbandry.

*159 H. General.

234 829 The partnership is attempting to profit from guaranteed milk prices without the knowledge or skill to do so. The herd seems to have been built up beyond the numbers which can be properly tended by the labour available.

There is little knowledge of modern methods and still less of costs and returns. The view is firmly held that "cows yield according to the amount they are fed" and the reply to the question "How much fodder is required to produce a gallon of milk was "Min jaf?" (Who knows?).

The partners are extremely conservative in their attitude to marketing, suspicious of outside interference and hostile towards the idea of co-operatives. Yet they expect

[426] continued Government assistance.

Their general pessimistic attitude is summed up: "Il-biedja f'Malta spiċċat" (Farming in Malta is finished).

Despite guaranteed milk prices on which the whole economy is based, the partnership is permanently in debt.

159 Their failure to profit contrasts with the success of the
824 Gozitan milk producer, Case I.
234 The partnership's main aim is to accumulate cattle with-
433 in the current artificial economy of milk production. There is no thought or care for what might happen if the subsidy were removed or even reduced.

CASE X : Ġamri (An arable farmer in partnership with a brother and engaged in diversified production.)

*159 Ġamri is an arable farmer, specialising in fruit. He
241 has a couple of goats and sheep, a mule, and is keen to
231 acquire more pigs for fattening. Most of his effort is how-
427 ever centred on the land holding which he and his brother work
472 in partnership. Some fifty-three tmien are rented by the two brothers together while Ġamri himself rents a further ten tmien.* About two-thirds of the land (17 plots) is owned by private landlords, one sixth belongs to the Church, one tenth to the Government and the remainder - about an acre - is owned by Ġamri's father.

*159 The working partnership of the two brothers is of many
472 years' standing. The brother's eldest son now works full-
464 time alongside the two men. The brothers say they could not
241 cope with any more land than they are working at present. They share the common view that hired farm labour is both uneconomic (at 25s or more for an eight-hour day) and inefficient. The land worked by the partnership is dry (bagħli) apart from two irrigable (saqwi) tmien. In 1957 it was utilized as follows:

311

Fruit and vines	21 tmien
Cereals and fodders	18 tmien
Fallow, unproductive, or sub-let	13 tmien
Potatoes	6 tmien
Other vegetables	5 tmien

*159 Apples are the biggest single cash crop and the overall
245 success of any year depends on them. They were introduced
242 to the district by Ġamri's father some years ago and now grow in large numbers in a sheltered valley along with lemons, oranges, mulberries, figs, cherry-plums and other fruits. The produce is good but is usually affected by some pest or disease. The most prevalent of these is a boring grub. Ġamri and his brother spend a large part of September and October simply gouging this pest from the trunks of affected trees - with penknife and piece of wire. They regard this time-consuming and unremunerative task fatalistically. But of late Ġamri has been wondering whether the same result might not be achieved in a fraction of the time by the application of some spray. He knows nothing of the details of this and is more than a little doubtful of possibilities.

*159 Since 1953 Ġamri and his brother have expanded their
245 area under vines, buying seedlings from the Government Farm
435 at 1d each. They consider vines the most profitable of crops, especially grapes for wine since these can be picked

*159 245 in a single picking and do not require the same attention to quality as those for the table.

*159 245 231 451 In this move towards more vine production and the recent interest in pigs Ġamri is making a conscious effort to emphasize the profitable in place of the unprofitable. Income for Ġamri means the receipts on produce sold. Unlike most farmers he keeps a record of this income in order to see "how business is progressing" and in order to enable him and his brother to effect a share-out of profits. As found generally Ġamri takes no account of his own labour, or that of his brother or nephews, in his costing. Moreover the position is complicated by the fact that no clear distinction is made between money spent on the home and family, and money spent on field rents, costs of seed, manure, etc. It is all held [593] "in one purse". Ġamri himself maintains that a more usual practice is for the farmer to give his wife a fixed amount for house-keeping but, in his own case, there is clearly a high degree of trust and co-operation between husband and wife.

*159 434 454 [511] At Easter, 1958, Ġamri spoke of a balance of some £400, less than half his reserves of a year previously. The drop was due to a £200 outlay on pigs and pig-sties together with several smaller items (such as £50 for street surfacing, £30 for a sewing machine, £15 hospital expenses, £30 for annual field rents, etc.) and the cost of repairing the damage wrought by the exceptionally heavy storms of late 1957. During the year 1956-57 it is estimated that Ġamri's income was about £350. £250 of this came from the sale of field produce as shown below, the rest is an estimate of income from pig sales and other items.

*159 434

Income:	From partnership land.	From Ġamri's Land	TOTAL
Fruit.....	£340	-	£340
Grapes.....	49	£ 8	57
Sulla.....	13	15	28
Potatoes.....	12	-	12
Melons.....	11	-	11
Tomatoes.....	7	13	20
Totals.....	£432	£36	£468
Ġamri's share	£216	£36	£252

*159 434 434 435 This income pattern is by no means standard from year to year. The 1956-57 season was a poor year, with potato prices to the farmer low, sulla yields below average and a glut of fruit. 1953, on the other hand, was the best of recent years and brought each of the two brothers an income of £310 on fruit alone. The 1956-57 season with its glut in fruit found a quantity greater than in 1953 bringing less return than in that year on the market. This uncertainty as to income between one year and the next is today more important to the arable farmer than to the herdsmen who can rely on the M.M.U.'s guaranteed price and can therefore estimate his income more [494] accurately. The arable, and, especially, the fruit-farmer

159 In the first two cases the seasonal distribution of
46 activity reflects the major points of contrast between the
241 'dry' and 'irrigated' operator. The herdsman stands in con-
231 trast to both of these with the care of his animals occupying
a large part of every day of the year - even including Sundays
and feste days when the field-working farmer expects to be off
duty.

159 Ġanri and farming
829 Ġanri is a highly intelligent man in his
24 forties who by his own efforts has progressed well beyond the
[212] limits of his very elementary formal education. He reads the
Maltese-language daily 'Il-Berqa' (B/55) and keeps abreast of
the school work of his children whom he encourages to learn
[191] English thoroughly as "the land cannot be divided among them
[891] all". English language is synonomous with education in his
thinking, and education, in turn, he sees as the means of
escape from the lowly position of the farmer in Maltese
society. "We are but an Arab breed", he observes somewhat
ashamedly. He himself has "little faith in the Government
[922] - which should help us". Much of this attitude had its roots
in the War years of 1939-45 when the siege and food shortages
produced something of a Golden Age for the food-producer.
The farmer has not forgotten the £10 offered by the Government
for 1 cwt of potatoes. Since the return to peace-time con-
[454] ditions the economic position of the farmer has certainly
deteriorated rapidly with the depletion in his reserves, built
up during hostilities, and the rise in labour costs and in the
[929] cost of living. During the War "the farmer was not so
435 hungry as the townsman who had to rely on the black market";
now his position is one of a constant battle with rising
[434] costs. Ġanri, as an arable farmer, lacks the steady and
[178] guaranteed income of the milk-producing herdsman. His recent
[231] moves towards pig-meat production represent an attempt to get
into an apparently more profitable line.

159 His nephew and many other farmers, though not Ġanri him-
829 self, make the mistake of failing to distinguish between the
794 Church and the Government in their attitude to "the authorities".
18 Thus the nephew regards the Catholic Action movement (of which
178 he is an active member) as somehow "helping to run the country".
But even Ġanri himself thinks that the Social Action Movement
(another part of the Church's Lay Apostolate) must have some
part in the secular administration of the country for he be-
lieves that an application for relief for storm damage made,
through the Parish Priest, to that Movement amounts to an
approach to the 'Gvern' (Government) of which he is so full
159 of criticism. The case illustrates a point made elsewhere
829 that the Maltese farmer is still primarily village-conscious.
18 Clearly this is not to deny, however, that his horizon today
178 is much wider than was the case when his father regarded

*159 241

for January planting at 3-4 cwt. per tomna.
Seed from crop used for sowing in following autumn.

(4) - Manure.

- Mixed urban refuse and animal manure plowed in to 12-18 inches.
- One field of 2 tmien received 1 truck load refuse and 30 sacks dry manure.
- One field of 1.5 tmien received 50 sacks of animal manure from O's stock.
- Vines receive c. ½ cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna almost every year.
- Wheat receives from ½ to 1 cwt. artificial fertiliser per tomna per year, broadcast with the seed.

H. General.

*159 [402] [423] [464] [178]

- Partnership has prevented excessive fragmentation of father's land.
- Free exchange of labour allows O to maintain a relatively large holding despite the inability of his young children to assist him. If these children wish to continue in farming, pressure on land will result.
- O therefore encourages his children in their education with a view to emigration and/or employment outside farming.

● [435] [451] [461] [157]

- O has no real idea of costing of his production. Can give details of income and expenditure, but makes no allowance for enormous application of labour (see E) necessary for very modest income (see F).
- Willing to undertake still more labour (e.g. in spraying fruit trees) to avoid cash expenditure.
- All this despite the fact that O is well above average in intelligence and standard of education.
- Conservative in techniques and attitudes but eager to invest in proven successes (e.g. extension of vines and apple orchards, development of pig-farming). However, markets may already be glutted.
- With clear, patient, reasoned and disinterested advice and encouragement, O could probably much improve his methods and yields to make his holding a more profitable enterprise.

*159 423

CASE XI : Pietru (An arable farmer mainly concerned with irrigated produce.)

The nucleus of Pietru's farm is a block of 14 irrigable tmien on which he spends the greater part of his time. His home is about a mile away in the village and he also holds a large number of patches of dry (baghli) land scattered over the northern part of Malta. The more outlying of these dry fields have tended to be neglected, or left to Pietru's wife and family to work, while he has concentrated on building up and developing his irrigable holding. His father bought four of these irrigable tmien after the 1914-18 War although at that time the area was covered with concrete. This was laboriously removed and irrigation channels ('canali') installed. Other adjacent patches were acquired as they became available - Pietru himself acquiring the latest addition in 1954. He had taken over from his father some years previously although he had started his working life as a mason.

*159 241 464

Today Pietru, his son, wife and daughters cultivate the 14 tmien very intensively. The suggestion of a pathway is rejected because "it would take up too much irrigable land".

CASE XI : Summary.

*159 (An arable farmer mainly concerned with irrigated produce.)

A. Land.

423 (i) 14 tmien irrigated land in single block of five fields
429 in Mallieha District. 2 tmien freehold.
(ii) c.8 tmien dry land in single block of 3 fields in Qawra District.
(iii) 45 tmien in single block (of which 37 wasteland) in Bajda Ridge area.
(iv) c.6 tmien in 21 scattered field plots in Marfa.

These lands lie on the periphery of a triangle with sides measuring 4½ miles X 2 X 2 miles. Leased land is held in a variety of ways e.g. some is held on an annual lease at a rate of 15/- a tomna, other is held in emphyteusis from the Government. Of the latter, a composition fee of £200 replaced as annual rental for the last 45 years of a 99 year lease for 45 tmien. For the rest a peppercorn rent of c.2/- a tmien per annum.

*159 B. Utilisation. With parcels of land so dispersed and so
241 variable in quality great variations in land use may be observed.
(i) The irrigated land carries potatoes, tomatoes, artichokes, a variety of pumpkins and marrows and many other types of vegetables. Tree crops are raised on the plot boundaries. Crop list: Potatoes, Tomatoes, Artichokes, Cucumbers, Marrows, Pumpkins and Water Melons, Sulla, Black and White Vetches, Turnips, Vines, Celery, Endives, Onions, Maize, Kohl Rabi, Carrots, Garlic, Figs, Pomegranates, Apricots and Peaches.
(ii) The unirrigated land ranges from patch cultivation of cereals, beans and peaches on Bajda Ridge to vines, cereals and vetches in the other districts. These parcels get only c.60 man-days work each year. This land although neglected is held, partly because of the low-rent emphyteutical leases, partly to supply small amounts of fodder and forages for the few livestock.

*159 C. Livestock. During 1957/1958 2 heifer calves. Cattle are
231 only kept for rearing between ages of c.3 and c.18 months, and for supplying dung. 4 goats (2 ewes and 2 kids) and 3 sheep kept for supplying domestic milk and cheese needs. No work animals ('bejjem tax-xoghol').

*159 D. Capital.

[423] - 2 tmien freehold irrigated land valued at £200 and
[435] freehold house in the village.
[454] - No liquid reserves other than petty cash, according to statement made to C.A.R.E. Estimated possible total less than £100.
[406] - Equipment. No machinery other than local tools and a fixed diesel water-pump. Not averse to mechanization but suspicious of credit terms.

E. Labour.

[464] - Family Labour of one adult son and occasional work from wife and from four other children. Mutual aid arrangement with brother-in-law.
[474] - A member of a C.A.R.E. implement co-operative (Section
[241] 2) which entitles him to favourable terms for tractor-ploving: shallow-plowing at 10s per tomna and deep-plowing at 20s per tomna. This represents a saving of 5s per tomna in return for a deposit to the Co-operative of £2.
[464] - Rarely hires labour.
[461] - An analysis of the daily work schedule based on an original record kept by the farmer's daughter:

TABLE 7

	July[f] 57	Oct 57	Nov 57	Dec 57	Jan 58	Feb 58	May 57
	am.pm	am.pm	am.pm	am.pm	am.pm	am.pm	am.pm
Sundays/Feasts	4 4	4 4	6 6	7 7	8 8	5 5	7 7
Business, Valletta	. .	. .	1 .	1 .	. .	. .	. .
Repairs fields & buildings (storm)	. .	2 4[l]	1 3	. .	. .	. .	. .
No work (storm)	. .	7 7[g]	6 3	3 3	8 7	2 2	. .
Irrigation	8 6[j]	1 2	. .	. .	. .	. 2	8 5[j]
Plowing	3 2	5 3	. .	. .	3 3	1 1	2 2
Planting, sowing	. .	4 3	6 6	12 11[a]	7 8[b]	4 1	7 2
Working, etc.	5 5[c]	4 2	3 5	1 2	4 4	5 3	. 3
Cutting, reaping	8 9[d]	2 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	2 2	4 3
Lifting potatoes	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	3 3[h]	3 5[i]
Threshing	. 3	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .
Loading, transporting	2 1	1 1	. .	3 3	. 2	. 1	. 2
Vines, prune, graft	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	6 7	. .
Collecting kmix[e]	1 1	1 4	5 5[k]	3 4	1 .	. 3	. 2
Collecting greenery		. .	1 1	. .	1 .	. .	. .
	31 31	31 31	30 30	31 31	31 31	28 28	31 31

Notes

a. silt potatoes.
b. potatoes 3.5.
c. working, weeding, dressing, spraying, manuring, hoeing, etc.
d. wheat and barley 4.2.
e. kmix - general greenery for animal fodder.
f. data for other months not available.
g. the latter part of 1957 saw exceptional storms in Malta & Gozo.
h. the winter crop a month late on account of damp conditions.
i. the spring crop.
j. irrigation in dry months.
k. kmix gathering peak after 2 months of rain.
l. including 2.2 attending to animals (too wet to work fields).

E. Production and Sales.

(i) Main cash-crop irrigated potatoes - Arran Banner. Two crops - winter and 'early' crop, the latter for export. Yields vary considerably in spite of irrigation - winter crop 1956 double the quantity of the winter crop 1957. Soil conditions for cultivation and for germination can vary critically between November and February. Prices similarly very considerably. 1956 - maximum price obtained 30/- per qantar. 1957 - April maximum price obtain 25/- per qantar. 1957 - May maximum price obtained 15/- per qantar.

(ii) Tomatoes. Pickings from May to October with peak production in July. Prices vary inversely with production (E/253). Irrigated local varieties only are grown. The best tomatoes are kept for seed, the next grade carefully selected for sale through 'pitkal' middleman for local market, the third grade sold to the tomato paste ('Kunserva') factory. Prices range from 10d. to 1/6d. per wizna, but vary with quantity available rather than with quality. Regarded as preferable to potatoes since the farmer believes they are less expensive to produce.

(iii) Artichokes. Irrigated perennials producing for up to about 8 years. Best marketing period is during Lent. Great efforts made to raise a crop early in

*159 433 435

February when prices start at c.9d a head rather than later in the year when they drop to c.4d a head.

(iv) A variety of other vegetable produce fruit and grapes are sold in small quantities.

(v) Stated cash income - £200 per annum. Regular income comes from arable products. Every two or three years sales of young heifers in calf bring in sizeable sums e.g. in 1958 one such Friesian heifer was sold for £170 and a 3 month old calf bought for £61.10.0.

G. Husbandry.

*159 241

(i) Land:

(a) Main concentration on maintaining high yields of vegetable crops on irrigated land, usually by heavy manuring rather than rotational farming. In 1956 - used all dung from own livestock.
- Purchased £100 worth of dung from an urban milk producer.
- Applied 25 bags sulphate of ammonia @ 25/- to 27/6d a bag.
- Collected several cartloads of mixed refuse from Government centre.

Dung applied directly to cucurbits, but mixed with refuse and sulphate of ammonia otherwise.

(b) On non-irrigated land crop sequence usually cereal, leguminous fodder, potatoes, except on poorest land where vetches alternate with barley.

[461] (c) Irrigation takes much of labour-time and water is applied empirically. A typical early potato crop will be watered 13 times, each watering by channel-and-bed control taking 1½ days.

[242] (d) Chemical treatment of the crops is accepted but not understood. Since 1953 Chloride of Lime and Copper Sulphate sprays have been used but the farmer is not at all sure of why they should help - the sprays are applied "when the potatoes show a blackness". This exemplifies a general attitude that certain pests and diseases can be treated with one or another of the "medicines" but considerable mystery surrounds the methods of application and the processes concerned.

(ii) Seeds:
Relies entirely on own plant strains except for potatoes. Is prepared periodically to buy Arran Banner seed-potatoes and in 1958 plucked up enough courage to try a new strain - Eigenheimer.

*159 23 (iii) Livestock:
Only interested in rearing heifers which are fed traditionally on a little grain, green fodder including "hexix", sulla, hay and beans.

H. General.

*159 241 433 435 [465] (i) An example of better kind of intensive market gardener. It is unlikely that without a complete re-organisation of his farming life any more irrigated land could be worked. At present casual labour costs of 15/- to 25/- a day, expansion of the labour force would be impossible. The only relatively simple economic improvement that could be made is the raising of quality standards and to a limited extent yields. In Malta there is no effective price differential between products of different quality, and the local market is very quickly saturated. This cultivator and others like him vaguely realise the predicament and pin their faith on minimum price guarantees, which in fact have little to do with the case.

*159 451 (ii) The farmers children keep rough accounts but only of the main items of disbursements and income. This is one of the few farmers who occasionally put a monetary value on his own labour. That of the family was taken for granted.

F. Production and Sales.

*159 433 434 234 [272]
(i) Cows milk sales range from December minimum of c.153 lbs. per day to April maximum of c.290 lbs. per day. Regards 3 gallon output per head a day as minimum profitable production. Milk receipts in 1957 c.£1350. (Costs of purchased fodder £1000).
- Goats milk sold for cheesemaking ('rikotta').
- About 20 gallons per annum of cows milk for cheese production.
- Practically no liquid milk drunk by family.

*159 241 [435] [433]
(ii) Potatoes - Winter Crop - September to December.
- 'Early' Crop - January to April.
Relies entirely on Arran Banner. Destination of crop depends on price e.g. Winter Crop 1956/57 sold at 25/- per qantar for export. Winter Crop 1957/58 sold at 27/- per qantar for local market.
- Usually produces c.50 qantar per annum and 4 or 5 used for domestic consumption.

[433]
(iii) Onions produced for export and local market and for home consumption. Production fluctuates with climate - yields between extremes of 20 and 40 qantar per tomna.

(iv) - Small sales of vegetables - considerable range grown.
- Fodder production meets c.one-half requirements.

G. Husbandry.

(i) Land
(a) On best land typical sequence would be.

Sept.	(a)	Heavy manuring - 96 bags of dung and refuse per tomna.
Sept.-Dec.	(b)	Winter crop of potatoes.
Jan.	(c)	Artifical fertiliser - Sulphate of Ammonia 1 bag per tomna.
Jan.-April	(d)	Spring crop of potatoes.
May-Aug.	(e)	Summer fallow.
Sept.-April	(f)	Two crops of potatoes as (a) to (d).
May-Aug.	(g)	Onions - on watered land.
Sept.-May	(h)	Cultivation for and growing of wheat crop.
May-Aug.	(i)	Fallow.
Sept.-April	(j)	Sulla.

(b) More usual practice (which is not though of as a strict rotation) is local variation of four-year cycle.
- Manuring. Potatoes, Onions, Wheat, Sulla, Vetches and seed fodders such as Torfa and Ginglin are introduced into this basic schem.
(c) On fields near house domestic vegetable crops, e.g. garlic, brassicas, pumpkins, and marrows.

(ii) Seeds
- Mainly relies on own seed but periodically buys seed-potatoes for maintaining standard of 'early' crop.

*159 232
(iii) Livestock - Breeds cattle from own stock but prepared to experiment e.g. interested in artificial insemination.
- Feeding. Has a fair idea of fodder needs of livestock but uses traditional combination of green legumes, sulla hay, beans and concentrates without measurement. Has started purchasing ready-mixed balanced feed.

H. General.

*159 433 451
(i) An example of the best type of cows' milk producer. Keeps rough accounts of expenditure and receipts from most of sales but even so does not think in terms of profit-income and does not compute family labour in monetary terms at all.

(ii) Is tending towards specialising in cattle-breeding and is inclined to doubt the value of the arable sector. Is typical of most of his class in that he keeps no accounts of fodder-production on his own

APPENDIX 1 D : Agriculture (S/164-1957)

131 (i) AREAS

AREA of the Maltese Islands..... 278,429 tmien (77,400 ac)
Area of Malta..... 217,143 tmien (60,800 ac)
Area of Gozo..... 59,286 tmien (16,600 ac)

423 CULTIVABLE AREA of the Maltese Islands 156,211 tmien (12,484 holdings)
Holdings of dry (baghli) land.... 116,480 tmien (10,517 ")
Holdings of irrigable (saqwi)land 700 tmien (88 holdings)
Holdings of both dry & irrigable. 39,051 tmien (1,879 ")

241 (ii) ACREAGE and PRODUCTION of CROPS, 1956-57

433

CROP	ACREAGE	VALUE(£)	YIELD(Tons)	YIELD per Acre (tons)
435 Wheat	5,192	98,908	2,916	0.6
Barley & Maslin	4,836	68,339	2,738	0.6
Vetches	1,727	51,993	1,354	0.8
Forages	11,000	381,150(a)	32,000(a)	2.3
Broad Beans	1,000	15,233	358	3.5
Cumin Seed	14	180	3	0.2
Cotton	35	800	8	0.2
Locust Beans	500	20,000	1,500	3.0
Total	24,304	616,603	40,875	
Potatoes (spring)	6,000	350,000	21,000	3.5
Potatoes (autumn)	3,057	193,384	9,157	3.0
Melons	2,721	32,908	1,714	0.6
Onions	788	47,970	3,000	3.8
Tomatoes	3,000	148,000	12,000	4.0
Other vegetables	3,887	344,744	18,438	5.0
Total	19,253	1,115,018	65,307	
Grapes	5,204	171,102	5,347	1.0
Citrus	180	32,000	510	3.0
Other Fruit	1,000	105,000	4,000	2.0
Total	6,384	308,102	9,847	
Flowers & Seeds	250	100,000	..	
TOTAL	ac.50,177	£2,139,721	116,029 Tons	

(a) Including Straw.

231 (iii) CLASSIFICATION OF LIVESTOCK, 1957 (September)

	Malta 1957)	Gozo (1957)	TOTAL(1957)	TOTAL(1949)
Horses.....	1,688	369	2,057	2,783
Donkeys.....	1,732	1,107	2,839	3,338
Mules.....	1,535	349	1,884	2,351
Goats.....	31,630	20,428	52,058	
Billy Goats.....	417	177	594	80,877
Kids under 1 year...	3,564	3,121	6,685	
Sheep.....	8,091	4,241	12,332	
Rams.....	98	43	141	21,257
Lambs under 1 year..	1,015	1,330	2,345	
Bulls.....	377	294	671	
Heifers Pregnant....	339	195	534	
Heifers other.....	731	363	1,094	
Milch Cows.....	2,536	863	3,402	3,833
Stud Bulls.....	111	26	137	
Maltese Draught-Cows	109	6	115	
Imported Store Bulls	2,869	824	3,694	
Breeding Sows.....	2,793	588	3,381	
Boars.....	214	87	301	29,818
Sucking Pigs.....	935	367	1,302	
Other Fattoners.....	6,581	1,753	8,334	
Hens.....	198,663	126,630	322,313	
Other Poultry.....	5,145	1,384	6,529	
Rabbits.....	43,845	18,848	89,693	